
11 September 2014

Dear Friends,

According to the “Progress towards meeting the MDGs for women and girl’s” report enrolment in primary education in developing regions reached 90 per cent in 2011, up from 82 per cent in 1999, which means more children than ever are attending primary school.

However, across 63 developing countries, girls were more likely to be out of school than boys among both primary and lower secondary age groups. The gender gap in school attendance widens in lower secondary education, even for girls living in better-off households.

Gender parity in schooling worldwide is closest to being achieved at the primary level; however, only 2 out of 130 countries have achieved that target at all levels of education.

In this edition of Newsflash, we will be discussing gender and the importance to mainstreaming it into all of our work.

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

(Resource) A Gender Toolkit for Educators – Techniques to Assist Educators in Mainstreaming Gender

(Resource) Watching the Watchdogs – A Gender and Media Literacy Toolkit for Southern Africa

(Resource) On Norms and Agency – Conversations about Gender Equality with Women and Men in 20 countries

(Accepting Letters of Inquiry) USAID Development Innovation Ventures

Gender refers to the social distinctions between boys and girls and men and women that are socially constructed rather than biologically determined. These distinctions are reflected in the roles that boys and girls play in society and the status that they occupy within it. Gender roles tend to be dynamic. They vary from one culture and time period to another and are characterized by unequal power relationships.

Gender mainstreaming involves bringing the contribution, perspectives and priorities of both women and men and girls and boys to the center of attention in the development arena in order to inform the design, implementation and outcomes of policies and

programs. It is a critical strategy not only in the pursuit of gender equality – a development goal in its own right – but also in the achievement of other development goals, including economic ones. Gender awareness is the ability to view society from the perspective of gender roles and how this has affected women’s needs in comparison to the needs of men. Gender sensitivity is translating this awareness into action in the design of development policies, programs and budgets.

Gender analysis can help identifying and understanding problems as they relate to education, and especially to the continued exclusion of girls from quality schooling. Gender analysis guides the process of finding viable and sustainable solutions to the problems of access, quality and learning achievement.

Gender analysis of what learners bring to education (including early childhood socialization, feeding and health access, cultural heritage and language), the content of education, teaching and learning processes, learning environments and learning outcomes help to highlight bad (and good) educational practices and policies. This analysis, in turn, should form the basis for educational interventions that are sensitive to both gender and human rights.

Applying a gender perspective helps to make differences in power relations visible. It also helps us to see more clearly the needs and rights of girls and boys in particular geographical, cultural and economic contexts.

The ultimate goal is to eliminate gender biases and discriminatory practices and policies, both overt and covert, which is critical to the empowerment of women and girls and to the achievement of gender equality in education.

(Resource) A Gender Toolkit for Educators – Techniques to Assist Educators in Mainstreaming Gender

INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to mainstream gender into especially journalism curricula, various partners in the field of education met at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Windhoek to discuss the approach to be adopted to accomplish this task. Facilitated by UNESCO, the representatives of the Namibian Chapter of the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA), the University of Namibia (UNAM), the International University of Management (IUM), the Ministry of Education and Polytechnic of Namibia (PoN), agreed that a gender toolkit be developed for educators in Namibia. While gender toolkits exist within the region, in order to devise a gender toolkit that is responsive to the needs of educators in Namibia, it was agreed that a Survey on Gender Awareness be conducted. The findings of such survey served to inform the contents of the toolkit.

To view the pdf online, visit: <http://bit.ly/1qrWMUb>

(Resource) Watching the Watchdogs – A Gender and Media Literacy Toolkit for Southern Africa

ABSTRACT

The Gender Links (GL) gender and media literacy course is based on the principle that any citizen in today's information era needs to know not just how to read, count and write, but also how to interpret what they are told by the media. GL created a toolkit entitled Watching the Watchdogs that draws from research and training material developed over a number of years on gender and the Southern African media. The kit consists of a ring file binder, "core" exercises and notes. Following the success of its pilot projects in South Africa, Gender Links decided to roll out the Media Literacy course in the SADC region. This process started with a training of trainers' workshop in March 2008 with trainers from across the SADC region. Most of the participants were representatives of the Gender and Media Southern Africa Network (GEMSA) country chapters. This case study is an example of the power of networks to conduct successful advocacy work around gender and the media, and also highlights Gender Links' commitment to citizen empowerment.

For a link to download the document, visit: <http://bit.ly/1xhE4ng>

(Resource) On Norms and Agency – Conversations about Gender Equality with Women and Men in 20 countries

ABSTRACT

Social norms, gender roles, beliefs about one's own capacity, and assets, as well as communities and countries, determine the opportunities available to women and men, and their ability to take advantage of them. World Development Report 2012 shows significant progress in many areas, but gender disparities still persist. Girls' desire for education, which nurtures their aspirations for greater agency, exceeded that of boys in rural and urban communities. Both young women and men wished for more education and better jobs than are common in their communities and strikingly wanted to marry later, bear children later, and have more autonomy in choosing their partners than traditional community norms dictated. The main pathways for women to gain agency are education, employment, and decreased risk of domestic violence. A safer space encourages women to negotiate for more participation and equality in household discussions and decisions. Women's ability to contribute to family finances and control (even partially) major or minor assets helps them gain more voice at home and in public spheres. Women's aspirations and empowerment to break gender barriers occur regardless of dynamic or poor economies, while men have perceived gain in agency, and their identity as breadwinner, largely depends on economic conditions. When only a few women manage to break with established norms, without a critical mass, traditional norms are not contested and may be reinforced. The process of gender norm change thus appears to be uneven and challenging, lagging behind topical conditions. The easy co-existence of new and old norms means that households in the same

community can vary markedly in how much agency women can exercise, and women feel less empowered when opinions and values of families and communities stay with traditional norms.

For a link to download the document, visit: <http://bit.ly/1wb7Oh9>

(Accepting Letters of Inquiry) USAID Development Innovation Ventures

The Development Innovation Ventures of USAID to Implement Innovative Ideas – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Development Innovation Ventures (DIV) accepts Letter of Interest (LOI) for innovative ideas to pilot and test them using cutting-edge analytical methods, and to scale solutions that demonstrate widespread impact and cost-effectiveness. The primary objective of DIV is to support the discovery of better ways to solve big problems.

Stages

- **Proof of Concept/Initial Testing** – The DIV grants support the introduction of a solution in a developing country context to gain an early, real-world assessment of the solution. This includes testing for technical, organization, distribution, and financial viability. Key activities could include assessing user demand, willingness to pay, and correct usage of products and services, as well as documenting social outcomes and real world costs to implement the solution. Grant ranges from \$25,000 to \$150,000 to implement the activities for up to two years.
- **Testing and Positioning for Scale** – The DIV grants support testing for social impact, improved outcomes and/or market viability, as well as operational refinement to build paths to sustainability and scale. Grant ranges from \$150,000 to \$1,500,000 to implement activities for up to three years.
- **Transitioning Proven Solutions to Scale** – The DIV grants supports transitioning proven approaches to scale. This includes adaptation to new contexts and geographies. Operational challenges for scaling should be identified and addressed, allowing refinement and iteration along defined pathways to scale. The funding and support provide a runway for applicants to grow, while engaging additional partners who will help scale the project beyond DIV support, but for whom more evidence of success and track record are needed. Categories – A & B. Grants available for Category A range from \$1.5M to \$6M, and Category B awards range from \$6M – \$15M to implement activities for up to five years.

Who Can Apply?

The DIV model implies an open grant competition supporting the most promising solutions that demonstrate cost-efficiency and the potential to scale up. DIV is supporting teams of young entrepreneurs, world-class development economists, public-private partnerships, international NGOs, and others around the developing world. Teams

are implementing scalable and cost-effective development solutions that address problems in maternal health concerns, election transparency, renewable energy, and other sectors in dozens of countries worldwide.

Applicants can be ideally anyone, any sort of organization or institution from any country in the world where USAID operates. It can be a lab in a university, a local organization with deep contextual knowledge, or a passionate entrepreneur. Innovations are expected to eventually scale up through the public sector, the private sector, or in some cases a combination of the two.

Eligibility Criteria

- U.S. and non-US organizations, individuals, non-profit, and for-profit entities, provided their work is in a country where USAID operates.
- Applicants must have the potential to deliver great development impacts.
- Applications can be made at any stage.
- An applicant can submit unlimited number of unique LOIs; however they can only submit one Letter of Interest at a time for the same idea.

If the letter of intent is selected, applicants will be sent the full application form with submission instructions. The selected full applications will be awarded funding to implement the activities.

For more information in DIV, visit: <http://1.usa.gov/1qhWMWX>

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website:

<http://www.firelightfoundation.org/resources/newsflash>

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org

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